

Together,  
we're making  
our families  
stronger.



Temporary Assistance for Needy Families  
Arkansas Department of Workforce Services

# TANF eNews

July 2014

An Electronic Newsletter from the Arkansas Department of Workforce Services

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## ATTOP Puzzle 2

The crossword puzzle in this issue of our newsletter is created from the articles that provide transition information. You will find clues within the articles for the puzzle solution.

The solution will be published in the next newsletter, coming your way in August, 2014.

## Improving Our Teamwork

By Phil Harris, Assistant Director, DWS-TANF

I hope that you have paused to reflect on the difference that you are making in the lives of so many children across the state. It is easy to lose focus of the entire family when you are engaging parents in discussions about employment entry and work activities. It is important that we understand the effects that poverty has on child well-being if we are to effectively help parents gain employment that will raise family incomes. I sincerely thank each of you for the work you are doing to bring positive change to the lives of our program participants! We are truly Champions of Change!!!

Now, speaking of change—we cannot talk about changing others unless we change ourselves—right? With that said, it is imperative that we continue to work together as a team, particularly during this program transition period. Everyone's job is important, especially during this challenging time.

I want to share a couple of teamwork quotes with you.

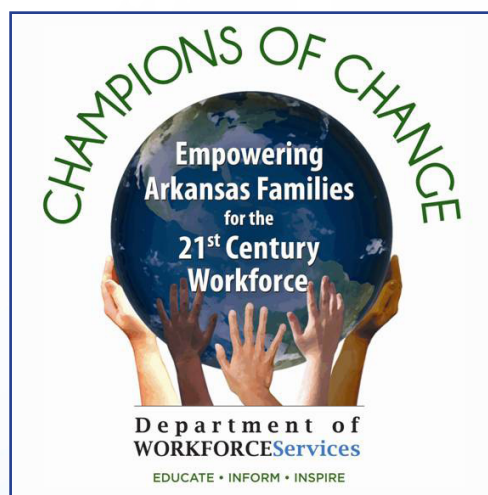
*Individually, we are one drop. Together, we are an ocean.* ~ Ryunosuke Satoro

*Teamwork divides the task and multiplies the success.* ~ Source Unknown

*If everyone is moving forward together, then success takes care of itself.* ~ Henry Ford

Effective teamwork brings success to the entire team and organization as well. The most important reason that teamwork is important is to achieve the goals that have been established for our program and agency. This cannot be the handiwork of just one individual. Even though the San Antonio Spurs have several star players on their 2014 Championship team, the reason they won is because they played as a team. They were unselfish, shared responsibility, encouraged and supported each other, and stayed focused on the task at hand. The greatest basketball player to ever play the game, Michael Jordan, said "Talent wins games, but teamwork and intelligence wins championships." If we are going to move from a "Good" program to a "Great" program, and successfully transition Eligibility Determination from DHS to DWS, teamwork is essential. I encourage each of you to make a commitment to help the DWS-TANF team win.

Also, thanks to all TANF staff who have submitted ideas and recommendations to the ATTOP Feedback email. Your responses have been great thus far. Please continue to send your feedback to [ADWS.attopinfo@arkansas.gov](mailto:ADWS.attopinfo@arkansas.gov). Your feedback and input is not taken lightly. We are interested in hearing what you have to say. We value what you have to say. Thanks again.



Jobs for People. People for Jobs.

**DWS**  
Department of  
WORKFORCEServices





## Blytheville Workforce Center: Good to Great

By Don Childers, Program Operations Manager

Based upon the cumulative results from the on-site Quality Assurance reviews and Work Participation Rates, the **ASK** (Assessments-Sanctions-Keying) Award has been awarded to the Blytheville Local Office.

The award recognizes local offices with exemplary performance in Assessments-Sanctions-Keying and is a prime example of a DWS local office following Director Artee Williams' Good-to-Great initiative.



Blytheville office TANF Staff, pictured left to right: Judy Duncan (AOC); Venisha Byais; Sharon Stringer (PAC); Eddie Perdue (LOM); Carolyn Stewart; Florene Washington; Phil Harris (TANF Assistant Director); Angela Atteberry; (not pictured- Christanne Farley, TANF Administrative Assistant and Luther Davis, TANF Supervisor)

## ATTOP Update: Meet You at the TOP!

Progress of the Arkansas TANF Transition and Optimization Project (ATTOP) continues since our last update. Between May 22 and June 26, the Program Transition team has completed the following activities:

- Identified the major TANF functions to transition with related topics (see sidebar at right)
- Conducted 15 of 16 discovery sessions with DCO management and staff for these functions to gather—
  - High-level business process and procedures / work flows
  - Policy
  - Forms / notices
  - IT systems currently used by these business units
  - Staffing and organization structure
  - Training curriculum, if any
- Collected, inventoried, and organized the materials we received
- Transferred this information to the DWS TANF Leadership Team

We are integrating the information we collected and reconciling it with current DWS-TANF functions; where those currently don't exist, we're calling them out.

Our primary goals for these activities are to:

- Provide DWS leadership information to use in establishing these functions within DWS.
- Finalize IT requirements for the new system based on these analyses
- Develop staffing plans for a revised TANF service delivery model
- Develop a Training Plan (that provides hands-on usage of the IT system as well as role- based operational procedures) for the transition
- Develop and document processes and procedures for operations of all functions

Next steps include interviewing DCO for the Collections function, completing the integrated fit-gap analyses, completing the remaining goals, and establishing the new units within DWS-TANF.

There is much work to do to prepare for this major transition, and we hope that each of you will contribute. The TANF leadership will also reach out to employees in local offices to help with this effort. We need your ideas, questions, suggestions, and assistance.

Many of you have used the ATTOP email box to communicate with DWS leadership—please continue to do that by emailing us at [ADWS.attopinfo@arkansas.gov](mailto:ADWS.attopinfo@arkansas.gov).

### ATTOP Update

Major discovery functions / topics for Eligibility Determination include:

- EBT, including contract and vendor information
- Quality Assurance
- Fraud Management
- Appeals and Hearings
- System Support
- Reporting
- Research and Statistics
- Special Investigations
- Physical Plant
- Document Management
- Intake and Eligibility
- Overpayments
- IRS Application /Security
- Security
- Training
- Accounts Receivable / Collections



## James Jones, Thank You For All That You Do

Some individuals show a special talent and enthusiasm for what they do. Some individuals often go outside the scope of responsibility to serve others, and they do so with a smile. Some individuals encompass all of those characteristics, and one of those individuals is James Jones, Program Operations Manager for DWS Information. The TANF Division extends a very special thank you to Mr. Jones for his time and dedication and for lending his expertise to the TANF electronic newsletter. James does not work for the TANF Division, but he has chosen to volunteer his time and skill by going above and beyond his normal work duties to do the layout for the TANF eNEWS. He's put his personal touches on the layout for a number of years, and the TANF Division is very grateful to him for his contributions.

Fellow employees have described James as "very professional, courteous, and helpful." Anyone that has worked with or around him can attest to the depth of his dedication and his level of expertise.

Over the years, James has shown a great passion for this job. His great skills and creativity have allowed the TANF eNEWS to continuously "Educate, Inform, and Inspire" the entire TANF Division.



## Who Are TANF Case Managers?

*People don't care how much you know until they know how much you care.*

By Chris Fuerst, TANF Program Area Coordinator, NW Arkansas

In a service-driven organization, you, the front line staff as case managers, are essential in the delivery of services and the success of our program. That's a heavy burden to carry, but you do it so well. TANF case managers are an indispensable component of the program. The essential case management skills and values that you demonstrate each day are the driving force behind our program. You assist our clients in accomplishing the changes they desire for themselves and their families. You are to be commended for a job well done. Take pride in the success stories of our program, and recognize your role in them.

Your job is not easy, but it is extremely rewarding. You are the essential support system necessary for clients to attain their goals. The process you apply daily includes a variety of strategies, techniques, and resources designed to build on your clients' strengths and overcome their barriers. You demonstrate

superlative interviewing, communication, teaching, and negotiating skills. You are able to accomplish the tasks needed to be successful. So, it is no doubt that TANF has been, is now, and will be in very competent hands.

The one thing you can count on is change. And TANF is changing. We have many new and wonderful things on the horizon, and you are an essential part of these changes and their success. There is no doubt that each of you will make a commitment to contribute fully in whatever capacity necessary for the success of the whole. We are a team. Together, let's look forward with great expectancy to the adventure that lies ahead.





## Success Story

Amber is currently a full-time employee at a local day care facility, Open Arms Learning Center, with full medical benefits for herself. She intends to pursue additional education and certification in child care with the intention of making it her career.

Open Arms Learning Center is currently one of the Employer Partners with the On-the-Job Training Program. Owner Jill Williams trained Amber through the OJT Program and hired her fulltime after only three months.

Amber was approved for TEA assistance in August of 2012. She had little work experience, which consisted of short-term employment in the fast-food industry. She wanted a career in child care, but she had no experience.

While Amber was assigned to job search, she completed her resume at the DWS office and was told to apply at all the local day care facilities. The Mountain Home TANF staff contacted a local employer, a partner, to discuss a possible Work Experience (WEX) or on-the-job training (OJT) assignment. They secured an interview for Amber. The employer saw potential in Amber and realized she would need training. Amber was assigned to WEX at the day care facility to determine whether this would be a good fit for both her and the facility. The TANF Program arranged child care for Amber's infant so Amber could attend her WEX site. The employer partner decided they would train Amber through the TANF OJT program. Amber was assigned and completed three months of OJT with the employer. Upon completing the three-month training, the employer hired Amber as a fulltime employee. She has been employed for two and a half months, with benefits for herself. Now she also participates in the Work Pays Program. Her employer has only wonderful things to say about Amber's performance.

This is a success for Amber and also for her employer and the local community. The employer now has a fully trained and exceptional employee because of the TANF OJT program support. Now she has income that allows her to put money back into the local community, stimulating the economy. Amber is moving toward self-sufficiency with her fulltime job and health insurance from her employer.

Amber is on her way to a career in child care. Her goal is to become a director at a childcare facility.



### Amber Norberg

Mountain Home Workforce Center  
Baxter County

TEA- Work Experience (WEX) – On-the-Job  
Training (OJT) – Work Pays

## June 2014 Puzzle Contest Winners

Winners of the puzzle contest in last month's newsletter are:

- Sarah Montgomery
- Florene Washington
- Nagashri Nagaraj

Mr. Harris promised a prize to the first three readers to solve the puzzle and send the solution to the ATTOP Feedback mailbox ([ADWS.attopinfo@arkansas.gov](mailto:ADWS.attopinfo@arkansas.gov)). These three have won a gift card!

We have a new puzzle in this issue of our newsletter. The first three readers to solve the puzzle and send the solution to the ATTOP mailbox will be recognized in the August issue of the newsletter. Time's a wastin'! Git on it now!

## ATTOP Puzzle 1 Solution

The following list identifies the words that make up the solution for the puzzle that appeared in last month's newsletter.

1. Outreach
2. Self-sufficiency
3. Employers
4. Communication
5. Employment
6. ASK
7. Feedback
8. Succeed
9. Benefits
10. Teamwork
11. Overall
12. ATTOP

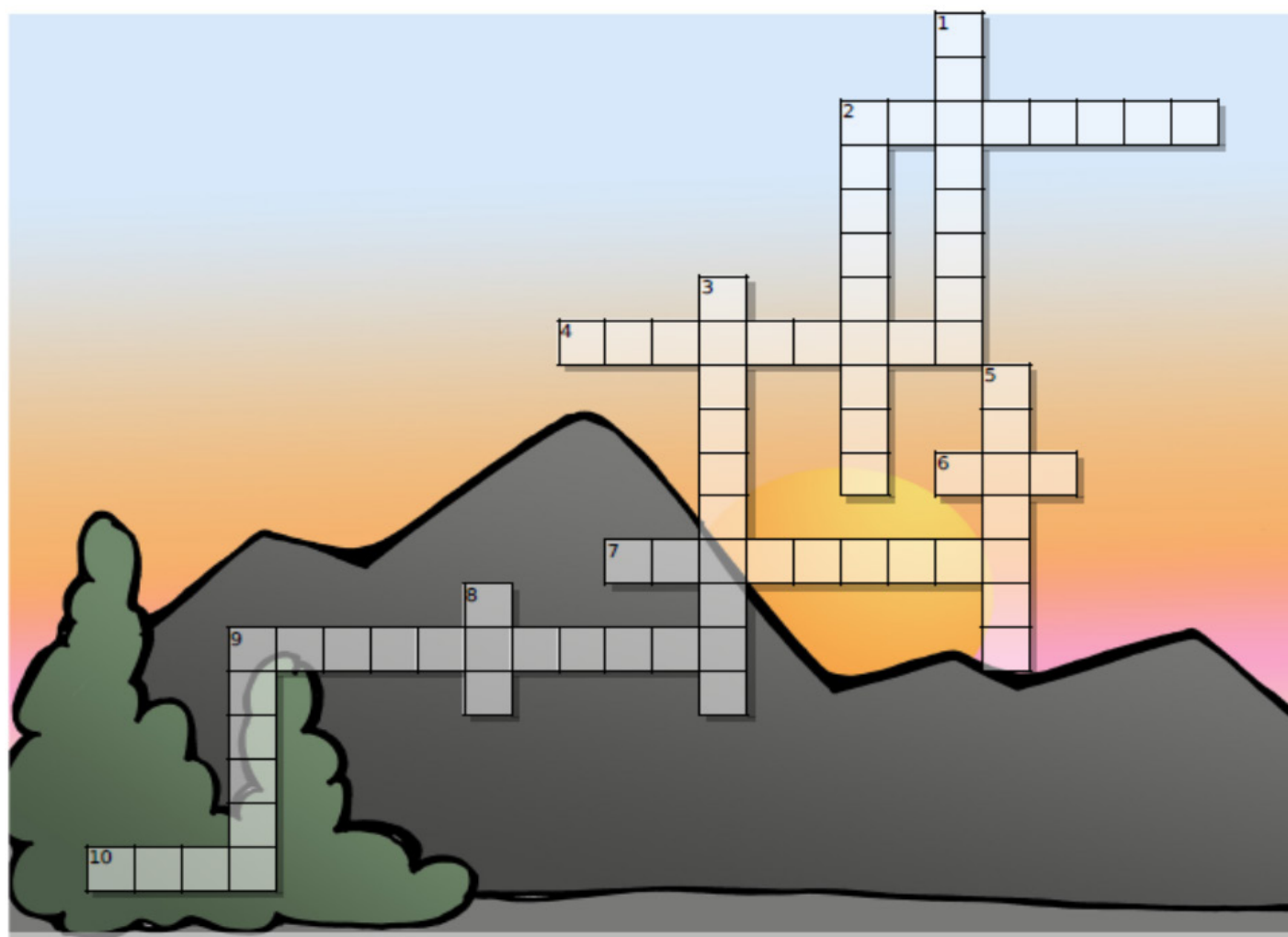
## ATTOP Puzzle 2

The crossword puzzle in this issue of our newsletter (next page) is created from the articles that provide transition information throughout the newsletter. You can find clues to the puzzle solution within the articles. When you solve the puzzle, follow the instructions below and email to [ADWS.attopinfo@arkansas.gov](mailto:ADWS.attopinfo@arkansas.gov), along with your feedback about the newsletter, ATTOP, and anything else you'd like to discuss .

1. Use a list of numbers 1 – 12 and write your solution for each clue by the appropriate number
2. Add your signature
3. Click Send to email it

The solution to this month's puzzle, along with the names of the contest winners, will be published in the August newsletter.

## ATTOP Meet You at the TOP!



### ACROSS

- 2 TANF is \_\_\_\_.
- 4 A Case Manager's job is extremely \_\_\_\_.
- 6 \_\_\_\_ will be interviewed for the collections function.
- 7 Case Managers are also known as the \_\_\_\_ staff.
- 9 \_\_\_\_ Local Office was awarded the ASK Award.
- 10 The Program Transition completed \_\_\_\_ primary activities this month.

### DOWN

- 1 The fourth goal for the ATTOP activities is to develop a \_\_\_\_ plan for the transition.
- 2 We are truly champions of \_\_\_\_.
- 3 The newsletter contains an appreciation for \_\_\_\_.
- 5 Assistant Director, Phil Harris, shared the teamwork quote, "Teamwork divides the task and multiplies the \_\_\_\_".
- 8 The first activity type Amber Norberg was assigned to at Open Arms Learning Center is \_\_\_\_.
- 9 Amber Norberg lives in \_\_\_\_ County.